

HOUSE BILL 643
By Cochran

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,
Chapter 6, relative to education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, is amended by adding
the following as a new part thereto:

Section 49-6-8301.

(a) The general assembly finds and declares that:

(1) Elementary and secondary education in the state is in crisis as
evidenced by the following:

(A) Many school children are performing significantly below
relevant national standards;

(B) Other school children are dropping out of school before
completing the ordinary course of secondary education; and

(C) A substantial number of the state's young people are leaving
school without the basic skills and knowledge that will enable them to find
and hold a job or otherwise function in society.

(2) Some schools are providing a better elementary and secondary
education than others in that:

(A) Students in these schools are performing near or above
relevant national standards;

(B) Students in these schools tend to remain in school until they
complete the ordinary course of their secondary education; and

(C) Students leave these schools with the basic skills and knowledge that will enable them to find and hold jobs and otherwise function as productive members of society.

(3) Parents of school age children are frequently unable to enroll their children in schools that will provide them with a quality education. This inability is caused by:

(A) Laws and regulations that limit parents' freedom to select schools that they believe can provide their children with a quality education;

(B) Parents' lack of influence over the educational policies and procedures of their children's schools; and

(C) Parents' lack of funds to pay for a quality education.

Section 49-6-8302. The state board of education and the department of education are hereby directed to develop a plan for repeal of rules and regulations that impede parental input into students' educational choices. Such plan shall also address the issue of greater school choice within a LEA by students who are otherwise restricted by zoning mandates imposed by LEAs. Such plan shall be presented to each member of the house and senate education committees by January 15, 2006.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.